

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUCHAREST 1462

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: US RO SHUM CVIS OEXC OVIP (CEAUSescu, NICOLAE) CSCE
SUBJECT: PUNGAN ON HIS U.S. TRIP AND BILATERAL RELATIONS

1. SUMMARY: IN CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR, PRESIDENTIAL COUNSELOR VASILE PUNGAN CONSIDERED HIS FEBRUARY 13-23 IV SOJOURN IN THE U.S. EXTREMELY WELL ORGANIZED, USEFUL, AND ENJOYABLE, AND HOPED IT WAS EQUALLY SATISFACTORY FROM U.S. PERSPECTIVE. HE APPRECIATED OPPORTUNITY FOR DIALOGUE WITH U.S. OFFICIALS ON CEAUSescu TRIP, CSCE, HUMAN RIGHTS, ECONOMIC AND FISCAL QUESTIONS AND FOUND HIS FIELD TRIP HIGHLY STIMULATING. PUNGAN ADVOCATED QUIET APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION AND COMMENTED ON EMIGRATION PROBLEMS. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING 45-MINUTE TETE-A-TETE IN HIS OFFICE ON MARCH 3, PUNGAN STRESSED HIS SATISFACTION WITH ARRANGEMENTS FOR HIS MOST RECENT VISIT TO U.S. AND OPPORTUNITY HE HAD TO CONSULT WITH PRIVATE SECTOR IN SOUTH, WEST AND EAST AS WELL AS TO TALK FRANKLY WITH U.S. OFFICIALS ON POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, FISCAL, CSCE, AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS. HE FELT THESE TALKS WERE USEFUL IN EVERY FIELD, INCLUDING HUMAN RIGHTS, BUT ON THAT SUBJECT HE EXPRESSED DISSATISFACTION WITH WHAT HE CONSIDERED A UWSS. MEDIA BIAS AGAINST ROMANIA. ROMANIA PRIZED ITS INDEPENDENCE AND SOVEREIGNTY, PUNGAN SAID, AND THREATS TENDED TO HARDEN
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ROMANIAN RESOLVE ON CERTAIN ISSUES. THEREFORE, HE HOPED U.S. AND ROMANIA COULD WORK OUT THOUGHTFUL, REALISTIC DIALOGUE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, AVOIDING THREATS BECAUSE ROMANIA AND ROMANIANS DID NOT TAKE KINDLY TO THEM. ON THE OTHER HAND THE QUIET APPROACH COULD BE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL, BECAUSE RESPECT FOR EACH OTHER'S INDEPENDENCE AND NONINTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS WERE UNDERLYING

PRINCIPLES OF ROMANIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS WITH ALL STATES, INCLUDING THE U.S. I SAID I WAS PLEASED THAT HE RAISED THIS QUESTION BECAUSE HUMAN RIGHTS WERE A PRIORITY CONCERN OF THE U.S., BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD, AND, AS HE KNEW, OUR CONCERN WAS IN LINE WITH THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS OUR TWO COUNTRIES SIGNED. HUMAN RIGHTS HAVE A PLACE IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH ROMANIA. PUNGAN SAID THAT WAS TRUE; HOWEVER, ROMANIA ALSO HAD A GREAT DEAL TO SAY ON THIS SUBJECT BUT REFRAINED FROM ATTACKING THE U.S., EVEN THOUGH THE U.S. CONTINUED TO HAVE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS. ROMANIA PREFERRED QUIETER APPROACH TO DISCUSSION OF THESE MATTERS. I SAID I WOULD TAKE OFFICIAL NOTE OF HIS STATEMENT BECAUSE, AS DOUBTLESSLY HAD BEEN EXPLAINED DURING HIS CONVERSATIONS IN WASHINGTON, WE WOULD NEED TO TALK ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES WITH GOR IN THE SAME SPIRIT AS OUR WIDE DIALOGUE ON OTHER SUBJECTS.

3. PUNGAN SAID THAT, AS I MUST NOW HAVE OBSERVED, HE WAS WILLING TO DISCUSS ANY SUBJECT. THIS HE SOUGHT TO DO IN WASHINGTON, BUT HE FOUND USG OFFICIALS' FIRST APPROACH ON HUMAN RIGHTS CARRIED MORE THE AIR OF THREAT THAN OF DIALOGUE. WHEN IT APPEARED THAT REAL DIALOGUE WAS POSSIBLE, DISCUSSION BECAME MORE POSITIVE.

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4. BACKGROUND DISCUSSIONS WITH U.S. JOURNALISTS THAT PUNGAN HELD IN WASHINGTON APPEARED TO BE USEFUL, BUT SOME NEWSPAPERS (INCLUDING THOSE WHOSE DIRECTORS HAD TRAVELED WIDELY IN ROMANIA, AS HE HAD NOTED UPON HIS RETURN) WERE NOT INTERESTED IN THE TRUTH ABOUT ROMANIA, FOR EXAMPLE, CONCERNING THE HUNGARIAN MINORITY. THESE PAPERS WERE SO ATTACHED TO THE IDEA OF "DISSIDENTS" THAT THEY PRINTED DISTORTED LETTERS. I INTERJECTED QUESTION ABOUT KIRALY'S CURRENT SITUATION AND ASKED ABOUT THE TRUTH OR LACK THEREOF OF HIS CLAIMS. PUNGAN SAID KIRALY WAS ONE MAN AND THOSE PERSONS WHO VISITED HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE AREAS COULD VOUCH FOR REAL TRUTH. MY EFFORTS TO GET A PRECISE REPLY TO QUESTION ON KIRALY BROUGHT NO REPLY. HE SAID THAT JOURNALISTS WERE FREE TO SEE FOR THEMSELVES AND, IN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO KIRALY, THAT THIS WAS BETTER APPROACH THAN DEPENDING ON ONE PERSON'S CLAIMS.

5. I TOLD PUNGAN WE SHOULD MEET FREQUENTLY AND DISCUSS VARIOUS ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. HE AGREED TO SEE ME WHENEVER NECESSARY, ALTHOUGH

HE THOUGHT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY SHOULD REMAIN THE NORMAL CHANNEL. SOME PROBLEMS, I SAID, MIGHT PROFIT THROUGH APPROACHES AT BOTH POINTS. I HOPED HE WOULD USE HIS GOOD OFFICES TO BRING MORE RAPID MOVEMENT ON EMIGRATION CASES, WHICH WERE MOVING MORE SLOWLY THAN DESIRABLE. HE KNEW HOW IMPORTANT THESE WERE TO OUR MFN RELATIONSHIP, I SAID, AND IN A YEAR WHEN OUR TWO PRESIDENTS WILL MEET OUR COOPERATION IN THIS AREA SHOULD SHOW REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT. IN RESPONSE, PUNGAN CLAIMED THERE WAS PROGRESS IN THAT AREA AND THERE WOULD BE MORE. I SAID THE FIGURES WERE NOT AS POSITIVE AS I HOPED. HE SAID THERE SHOULD BE SOME MOVEMENT ON NEARLY ALL CASES, EXCEPT A FEW DIFFICULT

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ONES, INCLUDING SOME ON WHICH NO SOLUTION WAS POSSIBLE. EVEN THE U.S. HAD CASES LIKE THAT, HE SAID. I SAID I WAS UNAWARE OF ANY AMERICAN WHO DESIRED TO EMIGRATE FROM THE U.S. OR ANY SINGLE AMERICAN WHO DESIRED TO MARRY A ROMANIAN WHO WAS NOT PERMITTED TO DO SO BY OUR GOVERNMENT. PUNGAN SAID SOME CASES JUQT COULD NOT BE SOLVED. HE SAID HE APPRECIATED OUR INTEREST IN THE MATTER SINCE IT HAD BEEN RAISED TWICE WITH HIM IN WASHINGTON. I REPLIED THAT I KNEW THE ROMANIAN GOVERNMENT AND ROMANIAN AUTHORITIES TO BE IMAGINATIVE AND RESOURCEFUL AND ALWAYS SEEKING SOLUTIONS TO DIFFICULT

INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS. I REFUSED TO ACCEPT THAT THERE WERE CASES WHICH DEFIED SOLUTION. I ASKED HIM TO KEEP OUR INTERESTS IN MIND AND DO WHAT HE COULD ON ALL CASES INCLUDING THE "DIFFICULT ONES." PUNGAN NODDED AND SAID, "YOU WILL SEE SOME MOVEMENT ON THOSE PERSONS WHOM YOU DEEM QUALIFIED TO GO TO THE U.S. AND THEREBY GIVE THEM A VISA, BUT WE ARE NOT GOING TO LET ROMANIANS WHO COULD HAVE A SECURE LIFE IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY GO TO VIENNA AND ROME WHERE THEY END UP IN CAMPS. IF YOU WANT THEM TO GO TO THE U.S., WHY DON'T YOU GIVE THEM VISAS?" I SAID THESE PERSONS WERE IN THE PROCESS OF GOING TO THE U.S. AND WE MADE THAT QUITE CLEAR. THE INDIVIDUALS DID NOT OBJECT TO STOPOFFS EN ROUTE TO THE U.S., NOR DID THE COUNTRIES OF STOPOVER. I SAID THESE GROUPS OF PROSPECTIVE IMMIGRANTS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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IMPORTANT TO U.S., AND REPEATED OUR REQUEST FOR RESUMPTION OF GOR FACILITATION OF THIS CATEGORY OF EMIGRANTS.

6. OUR CONVERSATION ENDED WITH AN AGREEMENT THAT HE WOULD CALL ME CONCERNING THE CEASESCEU ITINERARY AND THAT WE WOULD MEET PERIODICALLY WITHOUT THREATENING THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S PREROGATIVES.

7. COMMENT: PUNGAN WAS FRIENDLY, HOSPITABLE, AND AS USUAL FRANK WITH A WRY SENSE OF HUMOR. HE CALLED BEFOJ THE APPOINTMENT TO SEE WHETHER ANYONE WOULD ACCOMPANY ME--AND DISMISSED THE NOTETAKER WHEN HE SAW THAT I WAS ALONE. HE SEEMED MORE TROUBLED THAN USUAL AND WAS LESS TALKATIVE AND VISIBLY PAINED WHEN I MENTIONED KAROLY KIRALY. HE MADE CLEAR THAT I SHOULD CONTACT HIM WHENEVER I FELT HE MIGHT BE HELPFUL--BUT HE MADE NO PITCH TO BE THE SPECIAL U.S. CHANNEL. I WILL CONTINUE MY EFFORTS WITH PUNGAN ON MAJOR BILATERAL ISSUES BUT DOUBLE THEM THROUGH NORMAL FOREIGN MINISTRY CHANNELS AND WITH OTHER HIGH RANKING ROMANIAN OFFICIALS --MACOVESCU, ANDREI, PACOSTE, ET AL. PUNGAN CAN BE HELPFUL ON SOME QUESTIONS BUT OBVIOUSLY HE DOES NOT WISH TO BE DISADVANTAGED IN GOR COUNCILS BY BEING LABELED THE U.S. MAN, AND THIS SENSITIVITY MAY WELL BE HEIGHTENED WITH PATAN'S EJECTION AT MAJXH 7 CC PLENUM FROM MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE.

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